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A MATRIMONIAL TIFF

A FARCE IN ONE ACT

BY

HAROLD SANDER

DICK & FITZGERALD
PUBLISHERS
18 Ann Street, New York

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MATRIMONIAL TIFF

Farce in One Act

(Adapted from the German)

BY

HAROLD SANDER

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A MATRIMONIAL TIFF.

CHARACTERS.

UNCLE JOHN ..... *Elsie's uncle*
HENRY ..... *The husband*
ELSIE ..... *The wife*

TIME.—*The present.* LOCALITY.—*Any City.*

TIME OF REPRESENTATION.—*One hour.*

COSTUMES.

Costumes of to-day. ELSIE wears apron at rise.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

As seen by a performer on the stage facing the audience, R. means right hand; L., left hand; C., center of stage; D. C., door in center of rear flat; L. D., door at left, R. D., door at right. UP means toward rear of stage; DOWN, towards footlights.

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A MATRIMONIAL TIFF.

SCENE.—*Neatly furnished room with doors* C. *of rear flat,* R. *to hall, and* L. *to kitchen. Window* R. *Armchair* R. *at window. Table* R. *on which there are newspapers. Table* L. *with books, sewing material, ladies handkerchief, pepper and salt cellars, basket with knives and forks, soup-ladle, spoons, also wine and water bottles, and bread. Dinner table* C. *with plates, napkins, glasses, and spoons. Soup-tureen and meat dish off stage. Three chairs placed about table* C. DISCOVERED UNCLE *sitting at window reading paper.*

ENTER ELSIE L. D.

ELSIE (*talking toward kitchen*). No, no, Fredericka, stay in the kitchen. I will set the table. Do not put too much salt in the soup, and be very careful that the meat does not burn. (*To* UNCLE *as she sets the table*) You must excuse me, my dear uncle, for leaving you alone all this time, but you see a housekeeper has so much to do.

UNCLE (*rises and puts away paper*). You didn't think——

ELSIE. That I would find housekeeping so difficult, were you going to say? That's so, but I'll take pleasure in overcoming these difficulties. I am the happiest woman in the world, my husband loves me so dearly, he is so good and gentle—oh, the salt is missing—he will never make me unhappy, he has promised me this—and there is no pepper.

UNCLE (*handing her the pepper and salt cellars from table* L.). Here is——

ELSIE (*takes pepper and salt cellars and places them on dining table*). Oh, yes, when one person must oversee everything, something is bound to be overlooked. I must hustle, my dear uncle, as Henry may be back from the office at any

moment and I surely cannot delay our first dinner. (*Arranges napkins*)

UNCLE. Can I——

ELSIE. Help? Thank you, uncle, but setting a table must remain a story for men, and a duty for women—or—would you like to wear an apron? Oh, dear, I can't fold this napkin fan-shape, and I have the reputation of folding napkins perfectly.

UNCLE. You have——

ELSIE. Creased them too much already; you're right there. The more hurry, the less speed. There, now that's finished. (*Takes wine and water bottle from table* L. *and places them on dining table*) I'll place the water bottle here and the wine bottle at Henry's place. (*Admiring table*) Now everything is finished nicely—oh, heavens, the knives and forks are missing! (*Goes to table* L. *for knives and forks*)

UNCLE. Let me——

ELSIE. Get them? Don't inconvenience yourself, uncle. (*Places knives and forks on dining table*) I have them already. But you could do something for me, would you please cut the bread? (UNCLE *takes the bread*) Cut the slices very thin and let Henry have the crusts, he loves them. Oh, won't my husband be happy when he sees I have done my very best to please him. Don't you think I am an attentive wife, uncle?

UNCLE. I haven't——

ELSIE. Any bread-knife? Why didn't you say so? (*In her confusion she hands him the soup-ladle*) There, take it, and hurry so that everything will be ready when Henry comes. (*Puts knife basket back on small table.* UNCLE *has the bread in one hand and soup-ladle in other, looking from one to the other, nodding*) The poor man, he must be very hungry. He has been at the office since nine o'clock, and now it is almost two. Well, have you finished cutting the bread?

UNCLE (*business as before*). No, I——

ELSIE. Why not? (*Sees him with ladle, laughs*) What do you want with that ladle, uncle? Going to cut the bread with it?

UNCLE. I got it from——

ELSIE. From me? (*Laughing*) Really, how confused one gets. That's always the way when one is in a hurry.

UNCLE. Everything——

ELSIE. Goes wrong. You're right. (*Hands him bread-knife*) Here you are, now cut the bread—then everything will be ready. (*Arranging table*) I can be proud of this table,

everything is so neat and looks so inviting. Look at the table, uncle, and the napkins; I hemmed every one of them. I wouldn't think of praising myself, but the truth is that I am the best seamstress in town. The sewing machine is my fortune, why, I am indebted to the sewing machine for my Henry. Have you finished with the bread, uncle?

UNCLE. Yes, here——

ELSIE (*placing the cut bread on table and the remainder of loaf on table* L.). Thank you, uncle. There, my dear Henry, you deserve the best bread. To go back to the sewing machine. It was on account of a sewing machine that my romance with Henry started. Do you remember when Henry lived in the same house as we did, mother and I upstairs and Henry below us. Every evening precisely at seven I started to sew, at the same time Henry began his lessons. I believe he failed in the earlier examinations and of course had to study harder to make up. He passed the second examinations very easily and received a city position.

UNCLE. His failure——

ELSIE. Didn't make a bit of difference, were you going to say? I know it. But Henry studied under great disadvantages. The noise of my sewing machine running up-stairs bothered him, and he let us know it. Mother grew very angry at this and told him to find other lodgings; but he remained and after his final examination, he received an appointment, then made a proposal of marriage to me which I accepted, so I can thank my sewing machine for my dear husband.

UNCLE. That——

ELSIE. Pleases you? I know, you are very much interested in us. Oh, you cannot imagine, my dear uncle, how my husband loves me. As you know we have been married since yesterday and haven't had the least bit of a quarrel, that is the way things should be and will be forever.

UNCLE. A woman——

ELSIE. Is the luckiest person under the sun? Of course, of course, no one knows that better than I do. And do you know, I am very glad we were married so quickly—and some of the other girls are green with jealousy. For the last three weeks nothing else could be heard but "Is that so?" "Really?" "The poor man!" "Won't he be surprised!" As late as day before yesterday some of them even had hopes that our engagement would be broken. But I will get even with them all for their jealousy. All this afternoon my husband and I will look out of the window and show the others that backwardness and

agreeableness will triumph over jealousy and gossip. (*The town clock is heard striking two*)

UNCLE. It——

ELSIE. Has just struck two and Henry is not here yet. He said he wouldn't be any later than half-past one, and now—the roast, and the soup—I will be inconsolable if our first dinner—I must run into the kitchen! My dear uncle will you watch at the window and call me as soon as you see Henry coming?

[EXIT L.

UNCLE (*drawing a deep breath*). Ah—At last I can put in a——

ENTER *quickly* HENRY R., *wearing hat and coat, with cane in hand and documents under arm.*

HENRY. Here I am! Good-day, uncle. Where is my wife? In the kitchen?

UNCLE. Yes. She——

HENRY. Has been waiting for me all this time, I'm sorry, but I couldn't get here sooner.

UNCLE. She——

HENRY. Is a trifle angry? I hope not.

UNCLE. She has——

HENRY. Been anxious about me? Oh, and I was anxious about her! (*Calls*) Elsie—Elsie!

ENTER ELSIE L., *rushing into* HENRY'S *arms.*

ELSIE. Henry! You are here at last, you dear, horrible man! How could you keep me waiting so long, and on the first day of our marriage. Do you think that is right? Really, I am very angry.

HENRY (*laughing*). Oh, come, you are not going to be angry so soon, why we have been married only twenty-four hours!

ELSIE (*laughing*). You know very well that I never do get angry—but I must make believe I am once in a while.

HENRY. Oh, you villain! (*Tries to embrace her, but the cane and documents hinder him*)

ELSIE (*laughing*). You can't even put your arms around me. (*Takes hat in right hand, and cane in left*) Let me have your hat and cane and throw down the documents, then you can embrace me.

HENRY. The documents? (*Drops them on floor*) Now I am

free—(*Looking at her hands*) but now you cannot embrace me.

ELSIE. Indeed I can. (*Puts hat on her own head and drops the cane*) Now!

HENRY (*embracing her*). My dear Elsie.

ELSIE. My dearest Henry! (UNCLE *picks up the documents and cane, kneeling directly in front of* ELSIE *and* HENRY *as they embrace*)

HENRY (*looking down at* UNCLE). Haven't I the dearest wife?

UNCLE (*nodding*). Hm!

ELSIE (*looking down at* UNCLE). Isn't my Henry the best husband?

UNCLE (*nodding*). Hm!

ELSIE (*laughing*). Isn't this a pretty group?

HENRY (*laughing*). A scene for the Gods.

ELSIE. You are Mars.

HENRY. And you, Venus.

ELSIE and HENRY (*pointing to* UNCLE, *who is still kneeling*). At our feet, Cupid.

UNCLE. Oh!

ELSIE. No, were you going to say? You are an out and out Cupid, only just a little too old and Henry's cane is the bow.

HENRY. The documents represent the quiver, only the bandage is missing.

ELSIE (*quickly takes hat off, putting it on* UNCLE, *so as to hide his eyes*). There you are, Cupid is complete.

HENRY (*to* UNCLE). Haven't I a jolly wife?

UNCLE (*still kneeling, sighing*). Hm!

ELSIE (*laughing*). Do get up, uncle.

UNCLE (*tries to get up but cannot*). I can——

ELSIE. Cannot get up alone? Oh, you poor uncle!

HENRY *and* ELSIE (*help him*). Come.

UNCLE (*sighing*). It is——

HENRY. A long time since last you knelt, yes, I'm positive of that, my dear uncle.

ELSIE (*encouragingly*). You must be rewarded for this.

HENRY. By my wife's first dinner.

ELSIE. Who knows, it may not taste good.

HENRY. Who could doubt that? I know you have better taste than anyone else in the neighborhood.

ELSIE. Really?

HENRY. Certainly! (*Patting his chest*) Didn't you marry me?

ELSIE. Oh, you conceited boy!

HENRY. Come, hurry dear and serve dinner, I am dreadfully hungry.

ELSIE. Your own fault. Why did you stay so long?

HENRY. Couldn't get here sooner, my angel. Business of state, we had an extra session, so we had lots to do.

ELSIE. That isn't any excuse for staying so long. You should have said to the judge "My dear Judge, let us hurry and finish, I have no time to spare, my wife is waiting dinner for me." Had you said this to him in a nice way he never would have called for an unnecessary session.

HENRY. My dear child, the state does not bother about the personal affairs of its employees.

ELSIE. But the state should, especially if the people are hungry. Everybody must eat and drink, and furthermore, Henry, if my dinner is spoiled it is the state's fault and I will sue for damages. Now I will get the dinner. [EXIT L.

HENRY (*happily*). Isn't she the dear, jolly little wife! Uncle, you haven't any idea how much I love her. Anything she wants shall be done. Why do you stand there and hold my hat and cane and documents? Why don't you make yourself comfortable, put them down.

UNCLE. I don't——

HENRY. Know how to start in? Wait a moment, I will help you. (*Takes hat, cane and documents from* UNCLE *and places them on table*) There, now you are released from your burden.

ELSIE (*calling outside*). Open the door, open the door, the soup is coming.

HENRY (*goes and opens door for* ELSIE). The soup! Uncle, the soup!

UNCLE (*delighted*). The soup! (*Goes to table and fastens napkin in vest*)

ENTER ELSIE L., *carrying soup tureen.*

ELSIE. Good heavens, this is hot! (*Places soup tureen on table*) I'll hurry to put this on the table.

HENRY. But, my dear, why didn't you let the maid bring it in?

ELSIE. Indeed! Am I not the housewife? And you know, you should enjoy your meal so much more if I serve you.

HENRY. Yes, that is true. (*To* UNCLE) A dandy wife, hey?

UNCLE (*nodding*). Hm!

ELSIE (*taking off apron*). Now be seated at the table,

uncle at the left, Henry at the right, and I'll sit in the middle. (*All sit*)

HENRY. Yes, in the middle, the brightest diamond in the crown.

ELSIE (*serving soup*). The diamond is thankful to her crown. (*Giving* HENRY *a plate of soup*)

HENRY (*taking the plate*). Thank you.

ELSIE. You don't feel slighted, uncle, that I serve Henry first. As head of——

UNCLE (*nodding*). Hm!

HENRY. Heavens! Is that nudel soup? (*Uncle looks longingly into soup tureen*)

ELSIE. Certainly, your favorite dish.

HENRY. Oh, you angel!

ELSIE (*giving uncle a plate of soup*). Here, uncle.

HENRY. Isn't this fine? Isn't Elsie attentive?

UNCLE. Hm!

HENRY. Nudel soup. Really you are the very best of wives.

ELSIE (*who has also taken a plate of soup, laughing*). Just because I made nudel soup.

HENRY. Honestly, not for that only. (*Eating*) Uncle, isn't this soup delicious?

ELSIE. Is it good?

HENRY. Excellent. You should be rewarded for this.

ELSIE. Even for soup? Oh, I'm so happy!

HENRY. Oh, and so am I!

ELSIE. Our life will be heaven on earth, won't it?

HENRY. Certainly!

ELSIE. You will love me forever.

HENRY. And still longer than that. (*Eating*)

ELSIE. And will you always be true to me?

HENRY (*looking lovingly at her*). That is understood.

ELSIE. A quarrel will never disturb our peace.

HENRY. Never!

ELSIE (*leans over table to embrace* HENRY, *and in doing so upsets the salt cellar*) My dear Henry. (*Sees the salt cellar and screams*) Oh, good heavens!

HENRY (*jumps up*). What is the trouble, Elsie? (UNCLE, *frightened, rises and goes to* ELSIE)

ELSIE (*shaking*). That is my death.

HENRY (*sympathetically*). Don't talk like that, my dear girl. Why, you are as pale as death.

ELSIE (*very much frightened*) That—oh—my dear Henry—oh—can't you see—the salt cellar—I upset the salt cellar.

HENRY. The salt cellar? Well, if it isn't anything more than that—(*Sits at table again.* UNCLE *repeating the words "If it isn't anything more" in pantomime, sits at table and goes on eating*)

ELSIE (*very sad*). That is enough, Henry, more than enough.

HENRY (*laughing*). According to the way you screamed I thought a snake had bitten you.

ELSIE (*almost crying*). Laugh, you can afford to laugh. (*Looking at salt cellar*) There it lies—(*Putting hands to head*) my, how could I be so careless?

HENRY (*coaxingly*). My dear child, on account of a salt cellar. (*With a knife, replaces salt*)

ELSIE (*rising*). But my dear Henry, that is the worst luck that can happen to any woman. It means quarreling, you will see, and then I shall cry.

HENRY (*laughing*). Oh, nonsense, come, sit down and eat.

ELSIE (*sitting down, very mournfully*). But——

HENRY (*merrily*). A salt cellar is to disturb our peace. How foolish! Come, take it as a joke, ha, ha! Laugh it off, ha, ha!

ELSIE. Yes. (*A forced laugh*) Ha, ha, ha—I am laughing, but it does not come from the heart. My mother always told me that if one upsets a salt cellar, they will have a quarrelsome married life.

HENRY. Your mother was only joking, my dear Elsie.

ELSIE. No, my dear Henry, mother never joked about anything that was serious.

HENRY. Very well, we'll not talk about it any more. Come and eat, my dear. Why, your soup must be cold by this time, wait, let me replenish your plate with some that is warm. (*Takes her plate*)

ELSIE (*teasing*). Take care so that you also do not upset the salt cellar.

HENRY (*merrily, as he replenishes* ELSIE'S *plate*). Don't worry I'm not so clumsy.

ELSIE (*looking at him in surprise*). Clumsy!

HENRY (*putting plate in* ELSIE'S *place*). Here, my dear.

UNCLE (*handing* HENRY *his plate*). I——

HENRY. Would like more soup? Let me have your plate.

ELSIE. That is my duty. (*Takes* UNCLE'S *plate and refills it*) I will not let you take it from me.

HENRY (*laughing*). Shall I take the salt cellar away first?

ELSIE. Go on, make fun of me, that is just like a man.

HENRY. I'm only teasing you, my dear. (*During the follow-*

ing, he acts his part in pantomime and continues eating and refilling his soup plate)

ELSIE. Very untimely. Ever since the first salt cellar was made it has been said that when a salt cellar is upset——

HENRY. The salt falls out.

ELSIE (*slightly angry*). No, there will be a quarrel.

HENRY. Calm yourself, my dear, and let us eat.

ELSIE (*sighing*) Oh, yes, eat! (*Takes up spoon and puts it down again*) I cannot.

HENRY (*about to put spoon to his mouth*). Why not?

ELSIE (*dejectedly*). Laugh if you will, but I simply cannot forget that salt cellar.

HENRY (*laughing*). Do as I do, swallow it.

ELSIE. It would be perfectly dreadful, my dear Henry, if we quarreled on the first day of our married life.

HENRY (*encouragingly*). Do not fear, my angel, it could not happen. We love each other too much, there could be no quarrel between us. (*Laughing*) Why, a sheep couldn't have more patience than I have, and you are——

ELSIE. A sheep!

HENRY. My dear little lamb. (*Tries to take her hand*)

ELSIE (*draws her hand back*). Don't! (*A forced laugh*) I must indeed—be as meek as a lamb, because when you spoke so thoughtlessly before, I kept quiet.

HENRY. Perfectly quiet.

ELSIE. I didn't even get angry.

HENRY. You had no cause to. The thoughtlessness—was on my part. Come, eat, my dear—believe me, the story of the salt cellar is a joke, nothing more.

ELSIE (*quickly*). No, Henry, I object to that. It is no joke. My mother found out from experience that every time a salt cellar was upset, there would surely be a quarrel.

HENRY. My dear Elsie, that was only chance.

ELSIE (*hastily*). There is no such thing as chance. Everything is fate.

HENRY (*gently*). My dear child, stop all this nonsense, and eat.

ELSIE (*unwillingly*). Nonsense! That remark is entirely out of place, Henry.

HENRY. My dear, I only mean——

ELSIE. I don't need any explanation. I am a goose, I'm too stupid for you.

HENRY (*angrily, putting spoon down*). No, Elsie, you, you are simply unbearable.

ELSIE. Unbearable! Thank you, Henry. Yes, the salt cellar! Didn't I tell you? The salt cellar?

HENRY (*becoming excited, rises, but remains standing at table*). You must keep still about that salt cellar.

ELSIE (*jumps up, remaining standing at her place*). I don't have to.

HENRY. But I want you to, my child.

ELSIE. And I won't, my angel.

HENRY (*angrily*). Didn't the minister say yesterday that I was your master?

ELSIE. He said nothing of the kind. I was very attentive.

HENRY. Then he forgot to say it.

ELSIE. No, it is no longer fashionable. We women want freedom, and I am not afraid even if you dictate to me in this manner.

HENRY. Are you the quiet, gentle Elsie?

ELSIE. And are you the good, gentle Henry?

HENRY (*angrily*). Yes, I am.

ELSIE. So am I. But my mother always said, when a salt cellar is upset——

HENRY (*very angrily, taking water bottle without knowing it*). Good Heavens, do you intend to destroy our happiness? My child, your mother is a superstitious woman.

ELSIE. She is not, my angel.

HENRY. A country woman.

ELSIE (*outrageously*). Indeed not.

HENRY. I say, yes! (*Noisily thumps water bottle on table*)

ELSIE (*screaming*). Oh, oh! (*Leaves table. Goes up stage*)

UNCLE (*jumps up, but remains motionless at table*). Oh, you——

HENRY (*walking up and down in front of table*). Why, it's enough to turn a lamb into a tiger.

ELSIE. (UP *stage*). The salt cellar! The salt cellar!

HENRY (*standing still*). Good Heavens! I wish there never had been such things as salt or salt cellars in the whole world. (*Resumes walking*)

ELSIE (*comes down stage and also walks up and down*). Such conduct is unbearable. And married but yesterday.

HENRY. Yes, yesterday a paradise!

ELSIE. And to-day a hades!

HENRY. Yesterday, an angel!

ELSIE. Yes, and to-day a devil!

HENRY (*hands to his head*). Wasn't I a blockhead!

ELSIE (*hands to her head*). Fool that I was, to be trapped

like that. (*They meet at center of stage, both remain standing*)

HENRY (*to* ELSIE). Serves me right. Why did I bind myself to such a superstitious person?

ELSIE (*to* HENRY). These are the consequences when one marries an unrefined man. (*Both resume walking*)

HENRY. Oh! You do not know what you are saying, madam.

ELSIE. You'll never learn the manners of refinement in living, Mr. Government Clerk!

HENRY (*following* ELSIE). You are——

ELSIE (*turning quickly*). No, but that's what you are.

HENRY. You are a——

ELSIE. And you are a Nero!

HENRY. And who forced me to be one?

ELSIE. And me?

HENRY *and* ELSIE. You, and you alone, you!

HENRY (*coming forward angrily, to audience*). I ask every man in the world, every married man, every bachelor, every old man, and every young man whether I have not been forced to this quarrel? Didn't I listen to everything patiently? But it is impossible to keep still when a burning match is continually stuck under one's nose.

ELSIE (*also coming forward, quickly and angrily*). And I ask all the women, girls, widows and orphans if I am not the gentlest, friendliest, most backward and quietest among women? (*Addresses the ladies in the audience*) You have heard everything and you are the best witnesses. Answer for yourselves, could there be a more gentle woman than I? Didn't he anger me by talking back? Didn't he insult me? (*In a crying tone*) And wasn't I perfectly quiet? Didn't I swallow everything? Can I help it if we quarrel after a salt cellar has been upset——

HENRY (*very loud*). I want to hear no more of this salt cellar. (*Stamping foot*) Thunder!

ELSIE (*screams, goes* L.). Oh, this is my death! (*Sinks in chair*) I am dying——

HENRY (*sinks also in another chair*). And I am dead.

ELSIE (*sitting upright*). You brute! (*Sinks back*)

HENRY (*sitting upright*). You tyrant! (*Sinks back*)

Pause.

UNCLE (*who has stood in astonishment and watched both, comes down* C., *looking at* HENRY *and* ELSIE). A blessed meal!

[EXIT L.

ELSIE (*softly*). A blessed meal!

HENRY (*aside*). A blessed meal! (*Moving about in chair*) Such a scene! But such things can only happen to me, a government clerk. Oh, madam, you have torn your mask off too soon! I can see now that you have been acting. (*Rises*) How can a man be sure of a woman? Oh, I could jump out of my skin! (*Goes to window and looks out*)

ELSIE. It would be useless to argue with you any more. I can't repeat all your tender speeches, I'm only a weak woman. (*Between sobs*) I never expected such treatment from you. But that's what happens when anybody trusts a man blindly. Men are all monsters. (*Sobbing louder*) When they are courting, they promise everything—promise to make life a par—paradise—no cloud is to darken life—and then—right after the wedding—all that remains of the paradise—is the snake—the least trifle will cause him to lose his temper—and when a salt cellar is upset——

HENRY. Salt cellar! (*In his annoyance he begins to sing and beats time on the window-pane*)

ELSIE. Oh, yes, sing—keep on singing, while I weep bitter tears. (*Crying*) You are a brute—you have betrayed me—a poor innocent lamb—Oh, God! I can stand it no longer. (*Sinks with elbows on table and covers face with hands and handkerchief, crying*)

Pause.

HENRY (*remains at window, but keeps on looking back at* ELSIE). She is crying—and crying hard—perhaps I have done wrong. (*Takes a step toward* ELSIE) I suppose I have been harsh—no, not at all—I will remain firm—I have nothing to regret. (*Sits in armchair at window*) Who could have thought it? I was so happy when I came home—and the nudel soup—and everything else harmonized—and now? (*Drops head in hands, thinking*)

ELSIE (*raising her head, looking at* HENRY). He seems to be thinking—perhaps he sees his mistake——

HENRY (*looking toward* ELSIE). I will——

ELSIE (*quickly lowering head and crying*). Oh, Heavens! Oh, Heavens!

HENRY. Her crying is heartbreaking.

ELSIE (*slyly looking back and forth at* HENRY *without his noting it, then loud enough for* HENRY *to hear*). Oh, now I suppose I'll be getting a headache.

HENRY (*rising*). Headache? All right. (*Sits again in*

chair) I can't give in. If I give in the first time, I'll have to do it all my life. (*Looks toward window*)

ELSIE (*aside*). Is he hard of hearing? (*Looks slyly at* HENRY) He is thinking—perhaps he is sorry that he annoyed me—perhaps I had better—(*Turns around quickly*) But no, never, I must not be so weak, if I give in, I know he will always want me to give in.

HENRY (*looking slyly at* ELSIE). If she doesn't come, I certainly won't go to her.

ELSIE (*looking slyly at* HENRY). If he remains seated, I certainly won't get up.

HENRY (*thumping on window-sill*). I can't give in, I must show that I am a man.

ELSIE (*thumping on table*). I can stay here, I must show that I am the lady of the house. (*Sobbing loudly*) Oh—oh!

HENRY. I must overcome this music—I guess I'll read. (*Takes newspaper. Aloud*) politics, that will suit me. (*Holds up paper in both hands and reads*) —

ELSIE (*looking toward* HENRY). I do believe he is going to read. Oh, I can do that, too. (*Takes book from table*)

HENRY (*reading*). Foreign and local news.

ELSIE (*reading*). Extracts from famous authors.

HENRY (*turning toward* ELSIE). Really, she is not coming. (*Turns back*)

ELSIE (*turning toward* HENRY). Honestly, he is remaining seated. (*Turns back*)

HENRY (*reading aloud*). "David Goldstein has been elected president of the bank."

ELSIE (*reading aloud*). "Everything can be purchased, except true love."

HENRY. "Manager Johnson has made a great success in his new play."

ELSIE. "Memory is the only paradise out of which we cannot be driven."

HENRY. "Germany——"

ELSIE (*reads poetry*). . . . . .

HENRY. "Two more editors have been arrested."

ELSIE (*reads poetry*). . . . . .

HENRY. "The law firm of Ketcham and Cheatham has been dissolved. The proprietors have gone abroad."

ELSIE (*again reads poetry*). . . . . .

HENRY. If the house passes the bill—(*Aside*) If they put more duty on—(*Throwing down paper*) Enough of this!

ELSIE (*putting book away*). I don't care to read any more.

HENRY (*sighing loudly*). Oh! (*Turning to* ELSIE) What?

ELSIE (*turning toward* HENRY). How?

ELSIE *and* HENRY (*both looking away*). Nothing!

HENRY (*aside*). She is looking around——

ELSIE (*aside*). He seems to want to give in.

HENRY (*aside*). Now I guess she is coming over.

ELSIE (*aside*). Now he will probably fall at my feet and admit that he is wrong.

Pause.

ELSIE (*sneezing*). Atchi!

HENRY (*softly*) God bless you.

ELSIE (*snappy*). Thank you.

HENRY (*aside*). If she would only give me one friendly glance I would give in right away.

ELSIE (*aside*). If he would only say one kind word to me, I would be willing to make up.

HENRY (*aside*). She seems to be very stubborn.

ELSIE (*aside*). He seems to be thick-headed through and through.

HENRY *and* ELSIE. Can't we be mistaken in people?

Pause.

HENRY (*turns completely around and faces* ELSIE). Yes, yes.

ELSIE (*looks at* HENRY). Ah, ha, at last he will begin. (*Turns quickly from him*)

HENRY. She looked at me. (ELSIE *goes to window, looks out, and nods.* HENRY *remains seated but stretches to see to whom* ELSIE *nodded*) Well, what is it?

ELSIE. Nothing, nothing at all.

HENRY. But you nodded, you were greeting some one.

ELSIE (*lightly*). Yes, I saw Mr. Brand passing.

HENRY (*getting up quickly*). The boarder?

ELSIE. Of course. He bowed and I had to return it.

HENRY. I object to that.

ELSIE. You may, if you care to.

HENRY. It isn't necessary for you to greet everybody. It reflects on a young woman. (ELSIE *turns around facing* HENRY) Elsie.

ELSIE (*whispering*). Well?

HENRY. Don't you think we are acting very childishly?

ELSIE. I'm not.

HENRY (*tenderly and slowly*). Come to me.

ELSIE. Oh, no, you come to me.

HENRY. But I didn't start——

ELSIE (*quickly*). Neither did I. The salt——

HENRY. I beg you not to fall into the salt cellar again. Come——

ELSIE. No.

HENRY. Do. Just one step. I cannot.

ELSIE. I can do it still less. It is the man's place to set the woman a good example.

HENRY. Well, then we will each go half way.

ELSIE. I have no objections to anything that is fair. (*Both walk to center of stage and face each other.* HENRY *tries to take* ELSIE'S *hand, but she draws it back*)

HENRY (*tenderly*). Elsie.

ELSIE (*without taking notice*). What is it?

HENRY. Only look at me.

ELSIE (*looking up at him*). Well?

HENRY. Not so seriously, can't you smile, just the least little bit? (*Taking her hand*) There, you are laughing already.

ELSIE (*laughing, taking his hand*). You are a fool.

HENRY. And you are my dear, dear little fool. (*Kneels at her feet*)

ELSIE (*satisfied*). That is right, my dear Henry, that you should admit your wrong and get on your knees and beg my pardon.

HENRY (*surprised*). Admit my wrong?

ELSIE (*offering him her hand*). I forgive you.

HENRY. You forgive me?

ELSIE. From the bottom of my heart!

HENRY. You are very kind. (*Kissing her hand*) But my dear wife, will you please tell me of what I am guilty.

ELSIE. No, no, my dear Henry, you are not. I only said that when a salt——

HENRY. Enough, enough. You are right, I am the guilty one. (*Aside to audience*) Gentlemen, I am only a man like the rest of you. (*Aloud to* ELSIE) And now are you satisfied?

ELSIE. Perfectly! (*Aside to audience*) Ladies, I am only a woman like all of you!

HENRY. And everything is forgiven and forgotten?

ELSIE. Everything.

HENRY (*embracing* ELSIE). Victory! Then everything is as before, my dear, and we will never quarrel again.

ELSIE (*tenderly*). Never, never, my dear Henry. But I wasn't the cause of to-day's quarrel, the salt cellar ups——

HENRY (*trying to laugh*). Yes, yes, I know. But tell me, dear, what has happened to your uncle?

ELSIE. I really don't know.

HENRY. It seems he has gone.

ELSIE. I hope he didn't hear us quarrel.

HENRY. Heaven forbid! Why, we didn't speak loudly. (HENRY *goes to door* R., ELSIE *to door* L.)

HENRY *and* ELSIE. Uncle! Uncle!

HENRY (*opens door* R.). He is not here.

ELSIE (*opens door* L., *and looks out*). There he is in the kitchen with the roast in front of him. (*Calling*) Come, uncle, come!

HENRY (*crosses to* L. *and calls uncle*). This way, uncle, this way with the roast. Everything is over (*Taking* ELSIE *by hand and skipping about*) and we are happy.

ELSIE. Perfectly happy. My dear Henry, do me a favor and let us look out of the window together.

HENRY. But why, my dear?

ELSIE. So that all our neighbors will be surprised at our happiness. (*Opens window*) Come, Henry.

HENRY (*going to window*). With the greatest pleasure. (*Both look out of window, talking*)

ENTER, UNCLE, L., *carrying a roast on dish.*

UNCLE (*putting dish on table*). Is everything——

HENRY (*turning head toward* UNCLE). All right again? Everything, as you see.

ELSIE (*also looking around toward* UNCLE). And I must let you know, uncle, I was right. (*Again looks out of window*)

UNCLE (*nodding*). Hm!

HENRY (*to* UNCLE). A woman is always right.

UNCLE. Hm! But what are you do——

ELSIE (*both are now standing at window*). Doing at the window? Why, we are letting the neighbors see how perfectly happy we are.

UNCLE. Oh, I see—(*Goes quickly forward to center of stage*) Thank goodness! Then at last I may be able to put in a few words, and—(*Quick curtain, so that* UNCLE'S *sentence is cut short*)

A DOCTOR BY COURTESY

A Farce in Three Acts, by Ullie Akerstrom

PRICE 25 CENTS

CHARACTERS

DR. JOS. SLY, a physician (?).....Light Comedy
HENRI DUVAL, a French merchant.....Character
CHAS. JENKINS, Sly's father-in-law.....Comedy old man
FREDDIE WEST, a dude.....Character
MICHAEL, a hallboy.....Irish character
POLICEMAN, one of the finest.
FLORETTE DUVAL, Duval's Wife.....Lead
EMILY SLY, Sly's Wife.....Juvenile
MARTHA JENKINS, Jenkins's wife.....Old woman
IDA GAYGIRL, of the ballet.....Soubrette
GRETCHEN, Florette's maid servant.....Character

TWO INTERIOR SCENES.—TIME OF REPRESENTATION—Two hours.

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—Sitting-room in Sly's office. Mr. Jenkins resorts to heroic measures to boom his son-in-law's medical practice. Two women prepare a trap. Old associates draw Sly into folly. Clouds begin to gather.

ACT II.—Room in the house of Monsieur Duval. Florette's physician (by proxy) arrives. A startling prescription. Matters become worse and worse. A jealous husband and three doctors (?).

ACT III.—Same as Act I. The "green-eyed monster" appears in the Sly family. The story of a scratched face and a shower-bath. Explanations restore harmony, and Dr. (?) Sly retires from active work.

COLLEGE CHUMS

A COMEDY OF COLLEGE LIFE IN THREE ACTS, BY ANTHONY E. WILLS

PRICE 25 CENTS

A realistic sketch of College life and its influence. Wallace, an indolent aimless young man, on entering college is hazed by fellow collegiates, led on by Thorne, the bully of his class. He turns on the bully and thrashes him soundly. Out of revenge, he is so ingeniously accused of theft by the bully, that the crime appears to carry conviction. Finally the real thief exonerates him and the bully is expelled. There are some very funny passages between two opposing veterans of the war, and in the love making of a German professor. In due course the inevitable young lady comes on the scene with the usual results. A capital play, full of interest throughout.

CHARACTERS

FRANKLYN RISLEY, Dean of the University.....Character
FRIEDERICH VON WEBER, Professor of German.....Character
WALLACE FINDLAY, "The Babe".....Lead
HOWARD THORNE, "The Bully".....Heavy
ARTHUR KINGSBURY, Capt. of College Team.....Straight
PAUL DINSMORE, a Sophomore.....Straight
CLIFFORD PAIGE, manager of College Team.....Straight
JOHN FINDLAY, Wallace's father.....Character
ALEC, an old colored attendant.....Character
MRS. ALMIRA DINSMORE, Paul's mother.....Old Lady
GRACE DINSMORE, her daughter.....Lead
TOBY SPRAGUE, the watchman's daughter.....Ingenue

ONE INTERIOR STAGE-SETTING.—TIME OF REPRESENTATION—Two hours.

PHYLLIS'S INHERITANCE

A Comedy in Three Acts, by Frank H. Bernard

PRICE 25 CENTS

CHARACTERS

PHILIP MORNINGSIDE, a promising New York Attorney.
MAJOR PHILANDER MUMFORD, a Veteran of '61.
PIERRE MARQUETTE, of Paris and New York.
PATRICK MOONEY, M. P., Secretary of the Home Rule Association.
PETER MARTIN, a timid young man with a desire to be "sporty."
PAUL MARVEL, a private detective.
PHYLLIS MORNINGSIDE, Philip's up-to-date wife with ambitions.
PHOEBE MARTINGALE, has been a widow on four occasions.
PENELOPE MUMFORD, a veritable "butter-in" at all times.
PATRICE MUMFORD, her only child. She has just "come out."
ANGELA, ALICE, AMY } Trio of Vassar "bright lights."
PANSY, a housemaid of the "fresh" variety.
PATIENCE, who also assumes "domestic" affairs.

TWO SCENES, ONE INTERIOR AND ONE EXTERIOR.

TIME OF REPRESENTATION—Two hours.

Phyllis, wife of Philip, is to inherit the fortune of a deceased East Indian uncle, provided she marries his adopted son, who presumably is about to visit her. Being already married and most desirous of obtaining the fortune, she conceals the matter from her husband. Two men call upon her bearing introductory letters which she does not read, supposing each in turn to be the adopted son. The subterfuges she invents to account for their presence lead to many perplexing mistakes, which are finally satisfactorily arranged when it transpires that her husband is identified as the adopted son.

THE RED ROSETTE

A WESTERN DRAMA IN THREE ACTS, BY GORDON V. MAY

PRICE 25 CENTS

A typical drama of the Far West. The Major in command of a military fort advertises in New York papers for a wife, and elicits a response from a rich middle-aged lady. As a means of identification, each is to wear a red rosette. The lady arrives accompanied by her niece. The rosettes get into other hands, resulting in complications both ludicrous and serious. The niece is abducted and rescued by a young officer, a previous West Point acquaintance. The results are obvious. This play offers fine opportunities for character parts, and is replete with startling situations.

CHARACTERS

MAJOR PHILANDER BRAGGS, who owns one rosette.....Character
MISS OPHELIA SKIDDER, who owns the opposite rosette.....Old Lady
LIEUT. PHILIP MANLEY, who gets the Major's rosette.....Lead
CLARE BROOKS, who gets the other rosette.....Lead
ROBERT RUTHVAN, who gets into trouble.....Heavy
DANDY DAVIS, who gets his deserts.....Heavy
TOM SCOTT, Sheriff, who gets his man.....Straight
POP BOWLEY, who gets some boarders.....Straight
KITTY BOWLEY, who gets Tom Scott.....Ingenue

THREE SCENES, TWO INTERIOR AND ONE EXTERIOR.

TIME OF REPRESENTATION—Two hours.

MILITARY PLAYS

25 CENTS EACH

	M.	F.
BY THE ENEMY'S HAND. 4 Acts; 2 hours	10	4
EDWARDS, THE SPY. 5 Acts; 2½ hours	10	4
PRISONER OF ANDERSONVILLE. 4 Acts; 2¼ hours	10	4
CAPTAIN DICK. 3 Acts; 1½ hours	9	6
ISABEL, THE PEARL OF CUBA. 4 Acts; 2 hours	9	3
LITTLE SAVAGE. 3 Acts; 2 hours; 1 Stage Setting	4	4
BY FORCE OF IMPULSE. (15 cents.) 5 Acts; 2½ hours	9	3
BETWEEN TWO FIRES. (15 cents.) 3 Acts; 2 hours	8	3

RURAL PLAYS

25 CENTS EACH

MAN FROM MAINE. 5 Acts; 2¼ hours	9	3
AMONG THE BERKSHIRES. 3 Acts; 2¼ hours	8	4
OAK FARM. 3 Acts; 2½ hours; 1 Stage Setting	7	4
GREAT WINTERSON MINE. 3 Acts; 2 hours	6	4
SQUIRE THOMPKINS' DAUGHTER. 5 Acts; 2½ hours	5	2
WHEN A MAN'S SINGLE. 3 Acts; 2 hours	4	4
FROM PUNKIN RIDGE. (15 cents.) 1 Act; 1 hour	6	3
LETTER FROM HOME. (15 cents.) 1 Act; 25 minutes	1	1

ENTERTAINMENTS

25 CENTS EACH

AUNT DINAH'S QUILTING PARTY. 1 Scene	5	11
BACHELOR MAIDS' REUNION. 1 Scene	2	30
IN THE FERRY HOUSE. 1 Scene; 1½ hours	19	15
JAPANESE WEDDING. 1 Scene; 1 hour	3	10
MATRIMONIAL EXCHANGE. 2 Acts; 2 hours	6	9
OLD PLANTATION NIGHT. 1 Scene; 1¼ hours	4	4
YE VILLAGE SKEWL OF LONG AGO. 1 Scene.	13	12
FAMILIAR FACES OF A FUNNY FAMILY	8	11
JOLLY BACHELORS. Motion Song or Recitation	11	
CHRISTMAS MEDLEY. 30 minutes	15	14
EASTER TIDINGS. 20 minutes		8
BUNCH OF ROSES. (15 cents.) 1 Act; 1½ hours	1	13
OVER THE GARDEN WALL. (15 cents)	11	8

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COMEDIES AN

25 CENTS

BREAKING HIS BONDS. 4 A		
BUTTERNUT'S BRIDE. 3 Act		
COLLEGE CHUMS. 3 Acts; 2 hours; 1 Stag		
COUNT OF NO ACCOUNT. 3 Acts; 2½ hours		
DEACON. 5 Acts; 2½ hours	8	6
DELEGATES FROM DENVER. 2 Acts; 45 minutes	3	10
DOCTOR BY COURTESY. 3 Acts; 2 hours	6	5
EASTSIDERS, The. 3 Acts; 2 hours; 1 Stage Setting	8	4
ESCAPED FROM THE LAW. 5 Acts; 2 hours	7	4
GIRL FROM PORTO RICO. 3 Acts; 2½ hours	5	3
GYPSY QUEEN. 4 Acts; 2½ hours	5	3
IN THE ABSENCE OF SUSAN. 3 Acts; 1½ hours	4	6
JAIL BIRD. 5 Acts; 2½ hours	6	3
JOSIAH'S COURTSHIP. 4 Acts; 2 hours	7	4
MY LADY DARRELL. 4 Acts; 2½ hours	9	6
MY UNCLE FROM INDIA. 4 Acts; 2½ hours	13	4
NEXT DOOR. 3 Acts; 2 hours	5	4
PHYLLIS'S INHERITANCE. 3 Acts; 2 hours	6	9
REGULAR FLIRT. 3 Acts; 2 hours	4	4
ROGUE'S LUCK. 3 Acts; 2 hours	5	3
SQUIRE'S STRATAGEM. 5 Acts; 2½ hours	6	4
STEEL KING. 4 Acts; 2½ hours	5	3
WHAT'S NEXT? 3 Acts; 2½ hours	7	4
WHITE LIE. 4 Acts; 2½ hours	4	3

WESTERN PLAYS

25 CENTS EACH

ROCKY FORD. 4 Acts; 2 hours	8	3
GOLDEN GULCH. 3 Acts; 2¼ hours	11	3
RED ROSETTE. 3 Acts; 2 hours	6	3
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STUBBORN MOTOR CAR. 3 Acts; 2 hours; 1 Stage Setting	7	4
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